

# **ALASKA FALCONRY MANUAL NO. 7**



**Alaska Board of Game  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
July 1, 2004**

## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>January 1</b>	Due date for annual falconry reports. Date to request permit renewal (unless otherwise specified). Requests for renewal must be submitted <i>at least 30 days prior to expiration of the current permit</i> .
<b>January 31</b>	Date most falconry permits expire.
<b>May 26 – August 5</b>	Period when eyases may be taken.
<b>August 15 – November 30</b>	Period when passage birds, adult American kestrels and adult great horned owls may be taken.
<b>December 31</b>	Due date for annual raptor propagation reports.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

<b>Taking Raptors</b>	Report to the Department of Fish and Game office nearest the area where the raptor is to be taken <i>prior</i> to collecting it. You must also report to both the department and the USFWS (Form 3-186A) <i>within 5 days</i> of taking a raptor.
<b>Markers</b>	Upon taking a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon, a USFWS marker (black band) must be attached; a department marker (red band) must be placed on any other raptor originating from the wild and possessed in Alaska.
<b>Release/Loss/Death of Raptors</b>	Notify the department <i>prior</i> to the intentional release of any raptor. Notify the department and the USFWS (Form 3-186A) of any loss, escape, release, or death of your raptor <i>within 5 days</i> of such occurrence.
<b>Import/Export</b>	<p>Prior written approval of the Commissioner is required before any raptors may be <i>imported</i> into or permanently <i>exported</i> from Alaska.</p> <p>A person with a current permit for falconry from another state or province may import raptors and use them for falconry under the terms of a temporary import permit issued by the Commissioner.</p> <p>Raptors imported into Alaska must be accompanied by a health certificate issued within 30 days prior to the date of importation. A "health certificate" means a legible certification issued by an accredited veterinarian of the state of origin or the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (APHIS-USDA) and executed on an official form of the state of origin or of the APHIS-USDA.</p> <p>If you receive a permit from the department that authorizes export of a raptor from Alaska and the raptor you intend to ship or take out must go through Canada or a destination in another foreign country, contact the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain information, appropriate declaration forms, and export permits/licenses. Similarly, if you receive a permit from the department that authorizes importing a raptor into Alaska and the raptor will originate in a foreign country, you should contact these same agencies as well as the State Veterinarian with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.</p>

Cover illustrations courtesy of William R. Tilton

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Purpose

Falconry is the sport of pursuing, capturing, or killing game using a trained raptor. Falconry is a lawful hunting method when practiced in compliance with state and federal regulations under the terms of a permit issued jointly by the Commissioner of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). State falconry regulations were adopted by the Alaska Board of Game to assist in the management of raptor populations and maintain standards for the care of birds legally held for falconry purposes. This manual includes regulations that pertain to taking, holding and possession of raptors for falconry and issuing falconry permits. Complete authorities for issuing falconry permits and promulgating regulations are contained in 5 AAC 92.037 and AS 16.05.255. Federal regulations on falconry can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Part 21 (50 CFR §21.28 and §21.29).

Alaska regulations require that anyone taking, holding, or possessing one or more of the eleven authorized species of birds of prey must first obtain a falconry permit. Some distinctions are made governing the activities of beginning and experienced falconers. Whether you are a novice or an experienced falconer who is new to Alaska, the procedure may seem complex and is explained below.

### Requirements

You must be at least 14 years of age and, if you have not previously held a falconry permit in Alaska, you are required to answer correctly at least 80 percent of the questions on a supervised examination administered by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) staff. The examination is designed to test your knowledge of raptor identification, natural history of Alaska raptors, care in captivity, and applicable rules and regulations. You will also be required to provide adequate facilities for holding a raptor in captivity and proper equipment for practicing falconry. An ADF&G representative will inspect and approve your raptor housing facilities and equipment before a falconry permit is issued. If you fail the examination or are found to have inadequate facilities to care for a bird, your permit will be denied. A person who fails the examination may retake a similar test after waiting at least 30 days. An applicant may not take the examination more than twice during any six-month period.

These are the steps to take to qualify for a falconry permit:

1. Study the falconry standards included in this manual. You must have a thorough understanding of falconry regulations and standards.
2. Become familiar with the care of raptors and the art of falconry. References available at libraries or bookstores will acquaint you with caring for a raptor and explain how to train a bird for falconry. Suggested references are:

Beebe, FL and HM Webster. 1994. *North American falconry and hunting hawks*. Seventh edition, North Am. Falc. and Hunt., Denver, Colorado.

Beebe, FL. 1984. *A falconry manual*. Hancock House, Surrey, British Columbia.

Evans, H. 1960. *Falconry for you*. John Gifford, Ltd., London.

Mavrogordato, JG. 1966. *A falcon in the field*. Knightly Vernon, Ltd., London.

Mitchell, EB. 1960. *The art and practice of hawking*. C.T. Branford Co., Boston.

Peeters, HJ and EW Jameson, Jr. 1970. *American hawking, a general account of falconry in the new world*. Privately published, Oakside, Davis, California.

Woodford, MH. 1977. *A manual of falconry*. Third edition, Adam and Charles Black, London.

3. Become familiar with the natural history of raptors. Learn as much as possible about the identification of birds of prey and their habits. While much can be learned from reading, practical experience should not be overlooked. Spend as many hours as possible in the field observing birds in the wild. Recommended references are:

Bent, AC. 1937. *Life histories of North American birds of prey*. Dover Publications, Inc., New York.

Brown, L. 1977. *Birds of prey, their biology and ecology*. A. & W. Publishers, New York.

Clark, WS and BK Wheeler. 1987. *A field guide to hawks, North America*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Dunne, P and D Sibley. 1988. *Hawks in flight*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Ferguson-Lee, J and DA Christie. 2001. *Raptors of the world*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston

Fox, Dr. Nicholas. 1995. *Understanding the Bird of Prey*. Hancock House Publishers, Blaine, WA

Johnsgard, PA. 1990. *Hawks, eagles, and falcons of North America: biology and natural history*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington DC.

Newton, IN. 1979. *Population ecology of raptors*. Buteo Books, Vermillion, South Dakota.

Palmer, RS. 1962. *A handbook of North American birds*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

Peterson, RT. 1990. *Western birds*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Poole, A and F Gill (eds.) 1992-2001. *The birds of North America*. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, DC; Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

Wheeler, BK and WS Clark. 1999. *A photographic guide to North American raptors*. Academic Press, San Diego.

4. Complete the falconry examination. When you are ready to take the falconry test, notify the nearest ADF&G regional office and make an appointment to take the examination. The test will take a maximum of two hours, and it will be a supervised, closed book examination.
5. Make arrangements to provide housing and secure the equipment required for your bird. Proper housing is not only essential for successful falconry, it is required by ADF&G to insure that birds are adequately cared for (see standards included in this manual). The department has not established specifications for hawk houses or mews. Specifications are readily available in reliable falconry texts if a falconer wishes to construct such facilities. Raptors can be retained in captivity and properly cared for without recourse to construction of mews. Some falconers house their birds in the home or garage and utilize the backyard to meet the needs of their raptors. Consequently, this manual provides only a general description as to what constitutes adequate or inadequate facilities, *leaving final judgement to those who conduct the inspection*.

## Facilities

If mews are constructed for untethered raptors, the following general specifications should apply:

Loft, house, pen or enclosure size:

Large.....8' x 8' x 7'

(Gyr Falcon, goshawk, red-tailed hawk, peregrine falcon)

Small.....6' x 6' x 7'

(American kestrel, merlin, sharp-shinned hawk)

Mews shall have at least one window protected on the inside by vertical bars (dowels, tubing, etc.). Chicken wire or hardware cloth is unacceptable for covering windows. Artificial (plastic) grass (such as AstroTurf®) is recommended for the perching surface of blocks used for falcons; uncovered blocks are *not* recommended. Straw or sawdust/wood chips are *not* suitable for floors of mews due to the potential for harboring aspergillosis or other pathogens. Artificial (plastic) grass is easily cleaned and has proven to be good floor covering for mews.

Tethered raptors should be provided with a padded perch. When placed out-of-doors, raptors should be protected from cats and dogs, excessive exposure to wind, rain, snow or sun, and provided with water for drinking and bathing.

Poor physical condition of raptors (e.g., excessive broken tail and wing feathers, damage to cere and head, dirty appearance) is a sign/symptom of inadequate care. Examples of inadequate housing are:

- bird cage of the pet store variety;
- housing constructed of chicken wire, hardware cloth, or with exposed, sharp obstructions;
- housing with exposure to the elements; or
- unsanitary housing such as unclean chicken houses or pigeon lofts.

## **Equipment**

An applicant must possess the following items before a permit will be issued:

1. At least one flexible and weather-resistant leash and at least one strong swivel of acceptable falconry design (e.g., Sampo or falconry swivel). At least one pair of Aylmeri or similar type jesses constructed of pliable, high-quality leather or suitable synthetic material must be used when any raptor is flown free. Traditional one-piece jesses may be used on raptors when they are not being flown.
2. At least one suitable container for each raptor for drinking and bathing that is 2 to 8 inches deep and wider than the length of the raptor.
3. A reliable scale or balance suitable for weighing raptors and graduated into increments of not more than one-half ounce (15 grams).

Applicants should generally have spare materials and the tools necessary to make additional leashes, jesses, grommets, etc. The size, strength, and type of equipment and facilities should be appropriate for the size and type of raptor being held.

## **Procedures**

After passing the falconry examination, you should submit an application (Appendix A) for a falconry permit to the regional falconry representative at the nearest ADF&G regional office in Douglas, Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Nome. The regional falconry representative will forward the application and test results to the Division of Wildlife Conservation headquarters office where the falconry permit is reviewed. If approved, the permit is then sent to USFWS Regional Office in Anchorage for federal review and approval by the Migratory Bird Permits Office. The USFWS charges a \$25.00 permit application fee. The approved permit is returned to the originating regional falconry representative, who will inspect facilities to ensure that the permittee has adequate facilities and required equipment to properly care for a raptor.



New applicants for a permit in Alaska, who request a general or master class permit, must provide a photocopy of the most recently held permit/license issued from another state or province. Permittees who request a class upgrade must submit photocopies of out-of-state falconry permits/licenses AND annual falconry reports. An applicant for a general class permit must have a minimum of 2 years of experience in the practice of falconry at the apprentice level. In other words, to qualify as a general class falconer, you must have a total of 24 months of actual experience *with falconry birds in your possession*. An applicant for a master class permit must have 5 years of experience in the sport of falconry at the general class level. In other words, to qualify as a master class falconer, you must have held raptors and practiced falconry as a general class falconer for a total of 60 months.

Falconry permits are valid from the date issued through January 31 of the third calendar year following the year of issue (e.g., a permit issued on February 4, 2004 expires on January 31, 2007), unless a shorter period is prescribed on the permit. Not later than January 1 of each calendar year, a permittee must submit an annual report (Appendix B) with the required information. The department will provide the annual report form for you to complete and return to the nearest ADF&G regional office in Douglas, Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Nome. The regional falconry representative coordinates the submission of reports to the Commissioner of Fish and Game, and these reports must be submitted on time. Requests to renew permits are included on the annual report form and must be received by the regional falconry representative at least 30 days prior to expiration of the permit. Applicants renewing permits are not required to retake the examination.

Raptors legally possessed under an Alaska falconry permit may not be bred in captivity unless specifically authorized by the Commissioner of Fish and Game. Birds taken under authority of a falconry permit may not be sold or bartered. Temporary transfer of raptors between falconers requires proper notification of state and federal authorities. Prior written approval of the Commissioner of Fish and Game is required before any raptors may be imported into or permanently exported from Alaska. Raptors imported into Alaska must be accompanied by a health certificate, signed by a licensed veterinarian from the place of origin, and issued within 30 days before importation.

## **Markers**

Before taking a raptor, you must possess a valid falconry permit and an appropriate USFWS or ADF&G marker (band) issued in your name. USFWS markers are black in color, and department markers are colored red. Requests for markers should be made *in writing* well in advance of the date you anticipate needing them.

General and master class falconers who wish to obtain federal falconry markers (black bands) should contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (telephone 907-786-3311):

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Migratory Birds Permit Section  
1011 East Tudor Road  
Anchorage, AK 99503

To obtain ADF&G falconry markers (red bands):

Falconers who live *north of the Alaska Mountain Range* should contact:

Regional Falconry Representative  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
1300 College Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99701-1599  
(telephone: 907-459-7213).

Falconers who live *south of the Alaska Mountain Range* should contact:

Regional Falconry Representative  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, AK 99518-1599  
(telephone: 907-267-2182).

Federal markers (black bands) are used on only two species in Alaska. Upon taking a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon, the USFWS marker (black band) must immediately be attached by you to the raptor. Upon taking a sharp-shinned hawk, northern goshawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, American kestrel, merlin, golden eagle or great horned owl, you must immediately attach a department marker (red band) to the raptor. The marker shall not be removed, except that the rear tab may be trimmed and any imperfections on the surface may be smoothed, provided that the integrity of the marker and numbering are not affected.

## **Banding**

Applying a falconry marker to a raptor may be challenging, even to an experienced falconer. The paramount consideration in banding any bird is to ensure the marker fits properly on the tarsus and is applied without injuring or causing undue stress to the raptor. The following guidelines and illustrations are provided to assist you in accomplishing this important task.

1. Record the marker number in your personal banding diary and on USFWS Form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report).

**Note:** In Alaska, USFWS markers are used only on gyrfalcons and peregrine falcons. All other raptors require ADF&G markers.

2. Outfit the marker with protective tubing (figure 1). The installation of clear, plastic tubing over raptor markers serves to lessen the risk of injury to raptors by reducing marker abrasion to the tarsus and preventing accidental closure of the marker. Plastic tubing also protects the marker's identification number. The best choice of clear, plastic tubing is AWG Size #10 with standard 0.016" wall thickness, commonly used for electrical wire installation. It is usually available from the USFWS (inquire when

requesting markers from USFWS) or may be purchased from hardware and electrical supply stores.

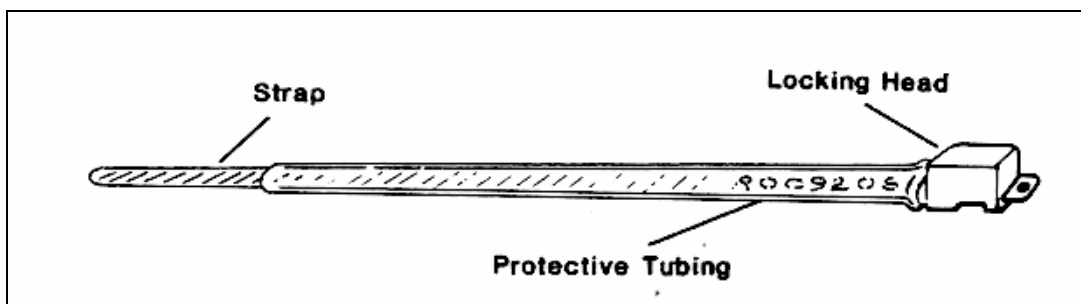


Figure 1

The length of protective tubing placed on the marker is very important since it limits how tightly a band may be closed on the tarsus. Use the following guide to determine the length of tubing to apply to the marker:

<u>Typical Applications</u>	<u>Length of Tubing (inches)</u>
sharp-shinned hawk	
male.....	3/4
female.....	7/8
goshawk	
male.....	1 3/8
female.....	1 1/2

<u>Typical Applications</u>	<u>Length of Tubing (inches)</u>
American kestrel .....	7/8
merlin	
male.....	7/8
female.....	15/16
peregrine falcon	
male.....	1 3/8
female.....	1 1/2
gyrfalcon .....	1 7/8
Harlan's hawk .....	1 7/8

Cut the tubing to length, ensuring the ends are square. Insert the marker strap into tubing as follows: hold the tube against a flat surface, push the strap through the tube until the tip is exposed, and grasp the strap tip and slide the tube solidly against the locking head. *Do not lubricate the strap or tube.* Pliers are useful for longer tubes. The marker, fitted with protective tubing, is now ready to be placed on the raptor.

3. Warm the marker in your hand while bending it into a circular form. Position the marker on the tarsus *above* the jess (figure 2). The marker should be placed on the raptor's left leg with the serial number right side up. This will tend to center the locking head in an outboard position if a nametag or bell is attached to the rear tab.

Insert the end of the strap through the locking head box (figure 3). Use pliers to pull the strap through and about an inch beyond the locking head. Slowly close the marker to the appropriate size by pulling the strap through the locking head. It should not be necessary to use pliers.

Use fingernail clippers or scissors to cut off the excess strap that extends beyond the locking head. It is important that the strap be cut flush with the surface of the locking head to prevent the bird from pulling at it.

**Note:** A properly fitted marker will move freely on the leg but be tight enough to prevent removal from an unjessed raptor.

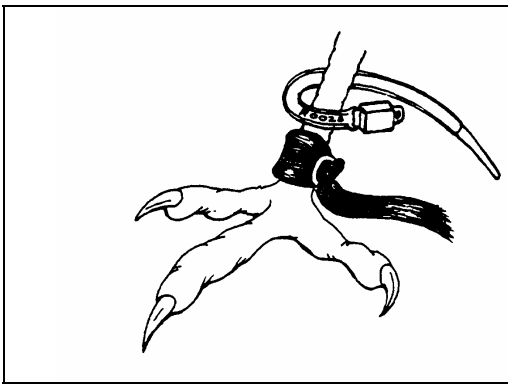


Figure 2

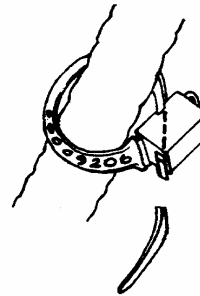


Figure 3

## **Records**

If you intend to take a raptor from the wild, you must report by telephone or in person to the office of the department nearest the area where the raptor will be taken *prior* to collecting. Within 5 days of taking any raptor, you must report to the department to provide information on the date of capture, the specific location of capture, and any other information deemed pertinent by the department. These requirements apply to any raptor taken in Alaska, regardless of whether it's a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon and you attached a USFWS marker or one of the seven other raptor species that require an ADF&G marker (see additional specific requirements for taking American and Arctic peregrines, pp 10-11). In most cases, notification after taking may be met by submitting USFWS Form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to the USFWS and also submitting a copy of Form 3-186A to the regional falconry representative. Form 3-186A is also used to inform the department and the USFWS in writing of any loss, escape, or death of a raptor within *five days* of such occurrence. Please note that markers (black and red) from dead or released raptors must be surrendered to the department within 15 days of death or release.

## **Captive Breeding**

Although approved by the Board of Game, captive breeding or propagation of raptors is not falconry and may only be conducted by qualified falconers under the terms of special propagation permits issued by the USFWS and ADF&G. For additional information about captive breeding of raptors in Alaska or to apply for propagation permits, contact ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Permit Section, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526 (telephone 907-465-4190) and USFWS, Migratory Birds Permit Section, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503 (telephone 907-786-3693).

## FALCONRY REGULATIONS

### 5 AAC 92.029. PERMITS FOR POSSESSING LIVE GAME.

...

(f) ... the following species may be temporarily released for the purpose of hunting dog or falcon training, field trials, and tests:

(1) Pigeon (*Columba livia* Var.)

(2) Pheasant, Junglefowl, or *Coturnix* (Subfamily Phasianinae)

(3) any Guineafowl species (Subfamily Numidinae)

(4) any New World Quail species, including *Colinus*, [i.e., Bobwhite] (Subfamily Odontophorinae)

(5) any duck, goose, swan, or other migratory waterfowl which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined does not require a federal permit for private ownership

(6) Chukar partridge (*Alectoris chukar*)

(g) A person using live game listed in (f) of this section for the purpose of hunting dog or falcon training, field trials, or tests

(1) may release the game only on the day of use and shall make reasonable efforts to capture, kill, or recover the temporarily released live game;

(2) may take the live game in connection with hunting dog or falcon training, field trial, and test activities; and

(3) must legally acquire, hold, and dispose of the live game in accordance with all other applicable state statutes and regulations.

...

**5 AAC 92.037. PERMITS FOR FALCONRY.** (a) A permit jointly issued by the department and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is required for taking, transporting, or possessing a raptor for falconry or for practicing falconry in this state. The permit will be issued under standards, procedures, and conditions set out in the Falconry Standards section of the Alaska Falconry Manual No. 7, dated July 1, 2004; that section of the falconry manual is hereby adopted by reference. Only a bird defined in this section as a raptor may be taken, held, or possessed for falconry.

(b) A person may not permanently export a raptor taken from the wild in Alaska unless the person has legally possessed that raptor in Alaska for at least one year. Prior written approval of

the commissioner is required before a raptor may be exported from or imported into Alaska, except as follows:

(1) a raptor legally possessed by an Alaska falconer may be temporarily exported from Alaska for a period not to exceed 12 months;

(2) an individual with a permit for falconry in another state or province may temporarily import a raptor, as defined in (f) of this section, and use it for falconry under the terms of a temporary permit issued by the commissioner; an individual moving into this state may import a raptor under authority of a temporary permit, but must apply for a falconry permit in this state within 30 days after the raptor arrives in this state;

(c) A falconer is liable for the actions of the raptor with respect to seasons, bag limits, and other applicable regulations. If a falconry bird takes game that may not be taken under established regulations, the falconer must leave the dead game where it lies, except that the raptor may feed upon the game before leaving the kill site.

(d) The commissioner may impose additional permit conditions as necessary.

(e) The following procedures and conditions apply to the application for and issuance of American peregrine falcon and arctic peregrine falcon capture permits (capture permits) and to the taking of American or arctic peregrine falcons for the practice of falconry:

(1) an applicant, who must possess either a) an Alaska master class falconry permit or b) an Alaska general class falconry permit with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level, shall submit a completed application on a form provided by the department;

(2) a person may not submit more than one application nor receive more than one capture permit during a calendar year;

(3) the total number of capture permits issued annually by the department will not exceed six, and the total number of capture permits issued annually by the department for the Sagavanirktok and Tanana Rivers will not exceed three for each area. Capture permits will be issued to Alaska general class falconry permittees with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level only if surplus capture permits are available after issuing capture permits to Alaska master class falconry permittees;

(4) if the number of applications received by the department exceeds the number of capture permits available, the capture permits will be issued on a lottery basis using the following ranking criteria: a) First Rank – master falconers with no previous year capture permit, b) Second Rank – master falconers with capture permit in previous year, c) Third Rank – qualified general class falconers with no previous year capture permit, d) Fourth Rank - qualified general class falconers with capture permit in previous year;

(5) for the Sagavanirktok and Tanana Rivers, a capture permit will be issued for each of the first three applications drawn under (4) of this subsection that specifies a preference for taking a peregrine falcon from one of those areas;

(6) if a permit drawing is oversubscribed and a surplus capture permit becomes available, it will be issued as provided in (4) and (5) of this subsection;

(7) a capture permit is nontransferable and an American or arctic peregrine falcon may be taken only by the person named on the capture permit;

(8) a permittee

(A) shall notify the department's Fairbanks regional office at least five days before taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon and identify the intended area and time of take;

(B) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, inform the department's Fairbanks regional office and the permittee's regional falconry representative of the date of taking, the location of the nest site, and the number of young in the nest;

(C) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, inform the department's Fairbanks regional office of the location of all other American or arctic peregrine falcon nests visited, the number of young in each nest, and other information requested by the department; and

(D) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, turn in to the permittee's regional falconry representative any leg band retrieved from an arctic peregrine falcon removed from a nest.

(f) Only a bird defined in this section as a raptor may be taken, held, or possessed for falconry. In this section, "raptor" means any bird of the following species:

(1) sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*);

(2) northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*);

(3) red-tailed or Harlan's hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*);

(4) golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*);

(5) American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*);

(6) merlin (*Falco columbarius*);

(7) gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*);



- (8) American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*);
- (9) arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*);
- (10) Peale's peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pealei*);
- (11) great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*);
- (12) a hybrid of the species in this subsection that is produced by a raptor breeder

**Note:** For regulations governing hunting of small game and migratory birds, including special seasons and/or restrictions for falconry (5 AAC 85.065), refer to the current **Alaska State Hunting Regulations or Alaska Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations**.

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## ALASKA FALCONRY STANDARDS

### Definitions

1. For the purpose of the falconry standards:

- a. “Falconry” means the sport of pursuing, capturing, or killing game by means of trained raptors.
- b. “Take” means to trap or capture, or attempt to trap or capture any raptor.
- c. “Raptor” means any bird of the following species: sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), red-tailed or Harlan’s hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*), Peale’s peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pealei*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), and hybrids of these species produced by raptor breeders.
- d. “Eyas” means a raptor from the wild in its first year that is not yet capable of flight.
- e. “Passage bird” means a raptor from the wild in its first year that is capable of sustained flight.
- f. “Permittee” means a person who takes, transports, or possesses a raptor for falconry or for the practice of falconry under a falconry permit issued in accordance with the falconry standards in this section of this manual.
- g. “Transfer of raptor” means to transfer or change the possession of a raptor from one permittee to another permittee; transfer does not include the sale, barter, or exchange of a raptor for anything of value.

### Permit Conditions

2. A person may not take, transport, or possess a raptor for falconry or for the practice of falconry in Alaska without possessing a valid falconry permit. A falconry permit shall be issued jointly by the department and a representative of the Alaska office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
3. A falconry permit is nontransferable. When accompanied by a current Alaska hunting license issued to the permittee, a falconry permit authorizes the permittee to hunt game in compliance with seasons, bag limits, and other provisions of law.
4. A falconry permit is valid from the date issued through the 31st day of January of the third calendar year following the year of issue, unless the department specifies a shorter period on the permit.

5. A representative of the department may, at a time mutually agreed upon by the permittee and the department, inspect a permittee's raptor and raptor facilities. If an inspection reveals that a raptor is in poor condition as a result of the permittee's negligence, if facilities are determined to be inadequate under federal standards in 50 CFR §21.29, or if the permittee violates any other provision of the falconry standards in this section of this manual, the department may revoke the permit.
6. Falconry permits are issued for apprentice, general, and master class falconers.
  - a. Apprentice class permits are issued under the following conditions:
    - (1) An applicant must be at least 14 years of age;
    - (2) An applicant must be sponsored by a general or master class falconer, regardless of the age of the applicant; a person may not sponsor more than three apprentices at one time;
    - (3) A permittee may not possess more than one raptor at any time nor obtain more than one raptor for replacement during any 12-month period; and
    - (4) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species, which must be taken from the wild: American kestrel, northern goshawk, and red-tailed or Harlan's hawk.
  - b. General class permits are issued under the following conditions:
    - (1) An applicant must be at least 18 years of age;
    - (2) An applicant must have a minimum of two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the apprentice class level;
    - (3) A permittee may not possess more than two raptors at any time nor obtain more than two raptors, whether for initial stocking or for replacement of raptors already possessed under a permit, during any 12-month period;
    - (4) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species: American kestrel, merlin, northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, gyrfalcon, captive-bred peregrine falcon, great-horned owl, and hybrid raptor. A permittee with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level may also take, transport, or possess a Peale's peregrine falcon, American peregrine falcon (capture permit required) and arctic peregrine falcon (capture permit required); and

- (5) An interspecific hybrid raptor must be surgically sterilized and may not be flown free unless the permittee first attaches to the bird at least one radio transmitter designed to track the bird if it is lost.
- c. Master class permits are issued under the following conditions:
  - (1) An applicant must have at least five years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level;
  - (2) A permittee may not possess more than three raptors at any time. During any 12-month period, a permittee may not obtain more than two raptors taken from the wild. At any time, a permittee may replace a lawfully possessed raptor with a captive-bred raptor bearing a seamless band;
  - (3) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species: American kestrel, merlin, northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, gyrfalcon, Peale's peregrine falcon, American peregrine falcon (capture permit required), arctic peregrine falcon (capture permit required), golden eagle (federal regulations contain additional provisions and restrictions for golden eagles), great-horned owl, and hybrid raptor ;
  - (4) An interspecific hybrid raptor must be surgically sterilized and may not be flown free unless the permittee first attaches to the bird at least one radio transmitter designed to track the bird if it is lost.
- 7. The commissioner may add to a permit other conditions that the commissioner determines are necessary under the circumstances in order to protect raptors that are to be taken, transported, or possessed under the permit.

### **Falconry Permit Application**

- 8. Application forms for Alaska falconry permits are available at the regional offices of the department. A person may submit a completed application form to the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, or Douglas office.
- 9. Before an application may be processed, the applicant must have answered correctly at least 80 percent of the questions on a supervised examination administered by the department. The applicant must demonstrate that the applicant has adequate raptor housing facilities and proper equipment, as required under 50 CFR §21.29, for practicing falconry and possessing raptors in captivity. Before issuing a permit, the department shall inspect the facilities and equipment to verify that they meet the applicable federal standards.
- 10. To renew a falconry permit, a permittee must submit a permit renewal application to the department at least 30 days before the expiration of a current permit. The department

may renew a permit if the permittee has complied with all provisions of the falconry standards in this manual. Renewal permits are valid from the date issued through the 31st day of January of the third calendar year following the year of issue, unless the department specifies a shorter period on the permit.

### **Temporary Facilities**

11. A permittee shall provide all raptors being transported or held in a temporary facility with safe, humane housing and shall protect the raptors from extreme temperatures and excessive disturbance. A person may not hold a raptor in a temporary facility for longer than 30 days.

### **Annual Report**

12. No later than January 1 of each year, a permittee shall submit to the department an annual report that lists all raptors in the permittee's possession and that lists all raptors held during the previous year. For each raptor, the permittee shall indicate the species, marker number, sex (if known), age (if known), date and location of acquisition, whether escaped, dead, or released, when the escape, death, or release occurred, and other information relating to the permittee's falconry activities, as required by the department.

### **Markers**

13. Before taking a raptor, a permittee shall obtain a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or department marker issued in the permittee's name. Upon taking a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon, a permittee shall immediately attach the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service marker to the raptor. Upon taking a sharp-shinned hawk, northern goshawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, American kestrel, merlin, golden eagle, or great horned owl, a permittee shall immediately attach the department marker to the raptor. The marker may not be removed, except that the rear tab may be removed and any imperfections on the surface may be smoothed if the integrity of the marker and numbering are not affected.

### **Taking of Raptors**

14. An eyas may be taken only from May 26 through August 5. A passage bird, adult American kestrel, or adult great horned owl may be taken only from August 15 through November 30. Except for American kestrels and great-horned owls, a raptor that is over one year of age may not be taken. An eyas may be taken only by general or master class falconer; no more than two eyases may be taken during the specified period, except for American peregrine falcon and arctic peregrine falcon only one eyas may be taken; and, at least one nestling must be left in any nest from which a bird is removed. For the taking of peregrine falcons the special provisions apply:
  - a. American peregrine falcon and arctic peregrine falcon capture permit requirements:

The department may issue a single nontransferable permit (capture permit) to take an American peregrine falcon or arctic peregrine falcon only to Alaska falconers who qualify under permit application procedures established in 5 AAC 92.037. The following procedures and conditions apply to the application for and issuance of American peregrine falcon and arctic peregrine falcon capture permits (capture permits) and to the taking of American or arctic peregrine falcons for the practice of falconry:

- (1) an applicant, who must possess either a) an Alaska master class falconry permit or b) an Alaska general class falconry permit with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level, shall submit a completed application on a form provided by the department;
- (2) a person may not submit more than one application nor receive more than one capture permit during a calendar year;
- (3) the total number of capture permits issued annually by the department will not exceed six, and the total number of capture permits issued annually by the department for the Sagavanirktok and Tanana Rivers will not exceed three for each area. Capture permits will be issued to Alaska general class falconry permittees with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level only if surplus capture permits are available after issuing capture permits to Alaska master class falconry permittees;
- (4) if the number of applications received by the department exceeds the number of capture permits available, the capture permits will be issued on a lottery basis using the following ranking criteria: a) First Rank – master falconers with no previous year capture permit, b) Second Rank – master falconers with capture permit in previous year, c) Third Rank – qualified general class falconers with no previous year capture permit, d) Fourth Rank - qualified general class falconers with capture permit in previous year;
- (5) for the Sagavanirktok and Tanana Rivers, a capture permit will be issued for each of the first three applications drawn under (4) of this subsection that specifies a preference for taking a peregrine falcon from one of those areas;
- (6) if a permit drawing is oversubscribed and a surplus capture permit becomes available, it will be issued as provided in (4) and (5) of this subsection;
- (7) a capture permit is nontransferable and an American or arctic peregrine falcon may be taken only by the person named on the capture permit;
- (8) a capture permittee may not take more than one eyas American or arctic peregrine falcon in combination from the wild per year;

- (9) Arctic peregrine falcons may be taken only in Game Management Units 22, 23, and 26, excluding a corridor extending one-half mile on either side of the Colville River, beginning at the mouth of the Etivluk River and extending downstream to Ocean Point, which is closed to harvest; and
  - (10) American peregrine falcons may be taken only in Game Management Units 12, 18-21, 24 and 25, excluding a corridor extending one-half mile on either side of the Yukon River, beginning at the Alaska/Canada border and extending downstream to Circle, Alaska, which is closed to harvest; and
  - (11) only eyases may be taken.
- b. Peale's peregrine falcon taking requirements:
- (1) An Alaska master class permittee, and an Alaska general class permittee with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level may take Peale's peregrine falcons;
  - (2) Peale's peregrine falcon may be taken only in Game Management Units 1-10 and 15; and
  - (3) only eyases may be taken.
15. Before taking a raptor from the wild, a permittee shall notify the department employee who is designated as the regional falconry representative and shall notify the department office nearest the location where the raptor will be taken. Within five days after taking a raptor, the permittee shall notify the department, shall submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to both the department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, shall provide to the department the specific location of capture, and shall submit other information related to the taking, as required by the department.
- a. Special notification requirements for the taking of American peregrine falcons and arctic peregrine falcons are listed below. A permittee:
- (1) shall notify the department's Fairbanks regional office at least five days before taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon and identify the intended area and time of take; no more than 3 arctic peregrine falcons may be taken from the Sagavanirktok River and no more than 3 American peregrine falcons may be taken from the Tanana River;
  - (2) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, inform the department's Fairbanks regional office and the permittee's regional falconry representative of the date of taking, the location of the nest site, and the number of young in the nest;
  - (3) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, inform the department's Fairbanks regional office of the location of all other American or



arctic peregrine falcon nests visited, the number of young in each nest, and other information requested by the department; and

- (4) shall, within five days after taking an American or arctic peregrine falcon, turn in to the permittee's regional falconry representative any leg band retrieved from an arctic peregrine falcon removed from a nest.

## **Import/Export**

16. Except for the temporary export of a raptor possessed under an Alaska falconry permit, a person shall obtain the department's prior written approval before exporting a raptor from or importing a raptor into Alaska. A person may not permanently export a raptor taken from the wild in Alaska unless that person has legally possessed that raptor in Alaska for at least one year. If the department determines it to be necessary to conserve or protect raptors in the state, or if the person desiring to import or export a raptor has not fully complied with the conditions or requirements of the falconry standards in this section of this manual, the department may disapprove the import or export of a raptor.
17. A person with an Alaska falconry permit who legally possesses a raptor may temporarily export the raptor from Alaska for a period of not longer than 12 months. A permittee shall notify the department of the temporary export of a raptor at least five days before leaving Alaska, shall provide the date of departure and anticipated date of return, and shall notify the department's regional falconry representative within five days after returning the raptor to Alaska.
18. A person with a permit for falconry in another state or province may temporarily import a raptor and use it for falconry for up to 30 days after the date of import under that falconry permit. If a person who temporarily imports a raptor intends to keep the raptor in Alaska longer than 30 days after the date of import, the person shall, within the 30-day period, apply for an Alaska falconry permit, deliver to the department any falconry permit issued for the raptor by another state or province, and certify in writing that the person intends to become a resident of Alaska.

## **Transfer of Raptors**

19. A person may not sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value a raptor held under a falconry permit. A permittee shall notify the department not less than five days before permanently transferring a raptor to another permittee. A person who acquires or disposes of a raptor shall submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to both the department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within five days after the acquisition or disposal. A person may not permanently transfer possession of a raptor originally taken from the wild in Alaska to a person located outside of Alaska.
20. A person may care for a permittee's raptor if, during the time of care, the person holds a written authorization signed by the permittee. If the period of care will exceed 30 days,

the permittee shall notify the department in writing within three days after transferring the raptor. The permittee shall inform the department of the location where the raptor will be held, the reason for the transfer, the name of the person who is caring for the raptor, and how many days the raptor will be in the transferee's care.

### **Release, Loss or Death of Raptors**

21. Only a raptor originally taken from the wild in Alaska may be intentionally released to the wild. Before intentionally releasing a raptor to the wild, a permittee shall notify the department and shall remove the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or department marker from the raptor. A permittee shall submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to both the department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service upon any loss, escape, release, or death of the permittee's raptor within five days after that event. A permittee shall deliver the marker from a dead or released raptor to the department within 15 days after the death or release of the raptor to the wild.
22. A permittee may retrap a marked raptor that is lost to the wild through accident, within five days after its loss, without notifying the department. If the permittee intends to retrap the raptor more than five days after its loss, the permittee shall notify the department that the raptor has been lost and that the permittee intends to recapture it. If a permittee recaptures the raptor, previously reported to the department as lost, the permittee shall notify the department within 48 hours after the recapture.

### **Imping**

23. A permittee may retain or exchange feathers that are molted or feathers from raptors that die in captivity only for imping purposes.

### **Captive Breeding**

24. The purpose of captive propagation of raptors is to reduce the take of wild Alaskan raptors by providing a source of captive-bred raptors for Alaskan falconers. Unless a person holds a propagation permit issued by the department, the person may not breed raptors in captivity for falconry. Propagation permits are issued under the following conditions:
  - a. The department may issue a propagation permit only to a person who:
    - 1) holds a federal raptor propagation permit,
    - 2) holds an Alaska master class falconry permit, and
    - 3) passes an inspection of facilities with the following guidelines:
      - i) adequate chamber size,
      - ii) double-door access to prevent escape,
      - iii) any window protected on the inside with vertical bars,
      - iv) adequate padded perches,

- v) adequate roof covering of chain-link or welded wire material,
  - vi) adequate floor covering [straw and/or sawdust are not suitable],
  - vii) adequate protection from the elements.
- 
- b. A propagation permittee may have no more than four individual birds originally taken from the wild and may have no more than 12 (twelve) birds for breeding that include first-generation captive progeny and wild-origin birds. A propagation permittee will have no limit on the number of second or later generation captive-bred progeny held in captive propagation. A raptor held under a propagation permit does not count as one of the three raptors that may be held under a falconry permit.
  - c. A propagation permittee may not sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value first generation captive-bred progeny of raptors and may only transfer first generation captive bred progeny to a person in Alaska who holds an Alaska falconry permit or to a person who holds an Alaska propagation permit. The propagation permittee may sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value second or later generation captive-bred progeny of raptors to any person holding a falconry license or captive propagation permit within Alaska or outside of Alaska. The propagation permittee shall dispose of captive-bred progeny within one year after hatching. Captive-bred progeny not sold or transferred as described in this subsection may be transferred or otherwise disposed of only with the written approval of the department.
  - d. Within a calendar year, a propagation permittee may not acquire, for raptor propagation purposes, more than two raptors that originated from the wild.
  - e. A propagation permittee may not possess a raptor produced by interspecific hybridization unless the raptor has been surgically sterilized.
  - f. A raptor that originated from the wild in Alaska and is held under a propagation permit may not be exported from the state.

**STATE OF ALASKA  
ALASKA FALCONRY PERMIT APPLICATION**

**1. NAME**

Last	First	M.I.
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**2. MAILING ADDRESS**

Street or P.O. Box		
City	State	Zip

**3. TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Home	Business or Message
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**4. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**

--

**5. ALASKA RESIDENT**

<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Since _____

**6. DATE OF BIRTH**

--

**7. LOCATION OF FACILITIES**

Street	City
--------	------

**8. DRIVER'S LICENSE OR I.D. NUMBER**

Number	State
--------	-------

**9. RAPTORS IN POSSESSION**

Species	Sex	Age	Band Number	Date Acquired	Source

**10A. PERMIT CLASS**

<input type="checkbox"/> Apprentice
<input type="checkbox"/> General*
<input type="checkbox"/> Master*

**10B. APPRENTICE'S SPONSOR**

Last Name	First	Telephone
Address		Class

**11. FALCONRY EXAM/APPROVAL**

<input type="checkbox"/> Exam Passed	Approved By _____	Date _____
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**12. CERTIFICATION**

I have read and understand the Alaska Falconry Standards. Furthermore, I hereby certify that all information made on or in connection with this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.	
Applicant's Signature _____	Date _____

\* An applicant requesting a general or master class permit must submit a photocopy of the most recently held permit/license issued from any state or province. An applicant requesting a class upgrade must submit photocopies of out-of-state falconry permits/licenses AND annual falconry reports, demonstrating compliance with Alaska Falconry Standard No. 7.

# ANNUAL ALASKA FALCONRY REPORT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Permit No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_, AK Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Class (check one) Apprentice ☐ General ☐ Master ☐ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Permit expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a renewal? Yes ☐ No ☐

## ANNUAL REPORT for \_\_\_\_\_ (specify year)

### RAPTORS ON HAND AT BEGINNING OF PERMIT YEAR (January 1)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Where (GMU subunit) or From Whom Obtained</u>	<u>Date Obtained month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

### RAPTORS ACQUIRED DURING 12 MONTHS ENDING DECEMBER 31

(Raptors acquired from the wild or another person)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Where (GMU subunit) or From Whom Obtained</u>	<u>Date Obtained month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

### RAPTORS NO LONGER IN POSSESSION

(since previous annual report)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Disposition*</u> (lost, transferred, died, released, stolen)	<u>Disposition Date month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

\*Disposition: Provide complete details, i.e., where lost or released, to whom transferred, cause of death, etc.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Annual falconry reports are due by January 1. Please send this report to your regional falconry representative.*

Falconry Representative  
ADF&G, Wildlife Conservation  
P.O. Box 667  
Petersburg, AK 99833

Falconry Representative  
ADF&G, Wildlife Conservation  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, AK 99518-1599

Falconry Representative  
ADF&G, Wildlife Conservation  
1300 College Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99701-1599

Falconry Representative  
ADF&G, Wildlife Conservation  
Pouch 1148  
Nome, AK 99762

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Appointments to take the falconry examination, applications for a falconry permit, annual reports, and general requests for information about falconry are handled by the regional falconry representative at a regional office of the Division of Wildlife Conservation.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
333 Raspberry Road  
**Anchorage**, AK 99518-1599  
Telephone (907) 267-2182

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
1300 College Road  
**Fairbanks**, AK 99701-1599  
Telephone (907) 459-7213

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
P.O. Box 240020  
**Douglas**, AK 99824-0020  
Telephone (907) 465-4265

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
Pouch 1148  
**Nome**, AK 99762-1148  
Telephone (907) 443-2271

Information about health certification and the importation of raptors is available from the state veterinarian, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

Office of the State Veterinarian  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
500 S. Alaska, Suite A  
Palmer, AK 99501  
Telephone (907) 745-3236

To obtain information about federal regulations, federal permitting requirements, or to submit the permit application fee for a new or renewed falconry permit, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Migratory Bird Permits Office  
1011 East Tudor Road  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
Telephone (907) 786-3693

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game administers all programs and activities free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, or disability. The department administers all programs and activities in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information please write to ADF&G, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203; or O.E.O., U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC 20240.